

## Life in a Time of Pestilence

From the Middle Ages onwards, deadly epidemics swept through portions of Spain repeatedly, but the Castilian plague at the end of the sixteenth century was especially terrible. In late 1596 a ship carrying the plague docked in Santander, and over the next five years the disease killed some 500,000 people in Castile, around 10 percent of the population.

Plague is traditionally understood to have triggered chaos and madness. By contrast, Ruth MacKay focuses on the sites of everyday life, exploring how beliefs, practices, laws, and relationships endured even under the onslaught of disease. She takes an original and holistic approach to understanding the impact of plague, and explores how the epidemic was understood and managed by everyday people. Offering a fresh perspective on the social, political, and economic history of Spain, this original and engaging book demonstrates how, even in the midst of chaos, life carried on.

RUTH MACKAY has worked as a university lecturer, newspaper editor, writer, translator, and interpreter, having been awarded fellowships from the American Council of Learned Societies, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Fulbright Commission, among others. She is the author of *The Limits of Royal Authority: Resistance and Obedience in Seventeenth-Century Castile* (1999), *“Lazy Improvident People”: Myth and Reality in the Writing of Spanish History* (2006), and *The Baker Who Pretended to Be King of Portugal* (2012).

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*The Great Castilian Plague of 1596–1601*

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Ruth MacKay



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We insist, it seems, on living.

Virginia Woolf [*The Waves*]

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## Abbreviations

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ACC	<i>Actas de las Cortes de Castilla</i>
AFB	Archivo Foral de Bizcaya (Bilbao)
AGN TR	Archivo General de Navarra, Tribunales Reales
AGS	Archivo General de Simancas
AHMA	Archivo Histórico Municipal de Ávila
AHN	Archivo Histórico Nacional
AMAH	Archivo Municipal de Alcalá de Henares
AMB	Archivo Municipal de Burgos
AMS	Archivo Municipal de Segovia
AMT	Archivo Municipal de Toledo
AMVA	Archivo Municipal de Valladolid
AMVal	Archivo Municipal de Valdemoro (Madrid)
ARCM	Archivo Regional de la Comunidad de Madrid
ARCV	Archivo de la Real Chancillería de Valladolid
ASV	Archivio di Stato (Venice)
AV	Archivo de Villa (Madrid)
BL	British Library
BN	Biblioteca Nacional de España (Madrid)
CC	Cámara de Castilla
CH	Cajas Históricas
CJH	Consejos y Juntas de Hacienda
CODOIN	<i>Colección de documentos inéditos de la historia de España</i>
CR	Consejo Real
CS	Consejos Suprimidos
E	Estado
Eg.	Egerton
EH	Expedientes de Hacienda
GyM	Guerra y Marina
HI	Sección Histórica
Inq.	Inquisición
IVDJ	Instituto de Valencia de Don Juan (Madrid)
LA	Libros de Actas

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PR	Patronato Real
RAE	Real Academia Española
RAH	Real Academia de la Historia
RBP	Real Biblioteca del Palacio (Madrid)

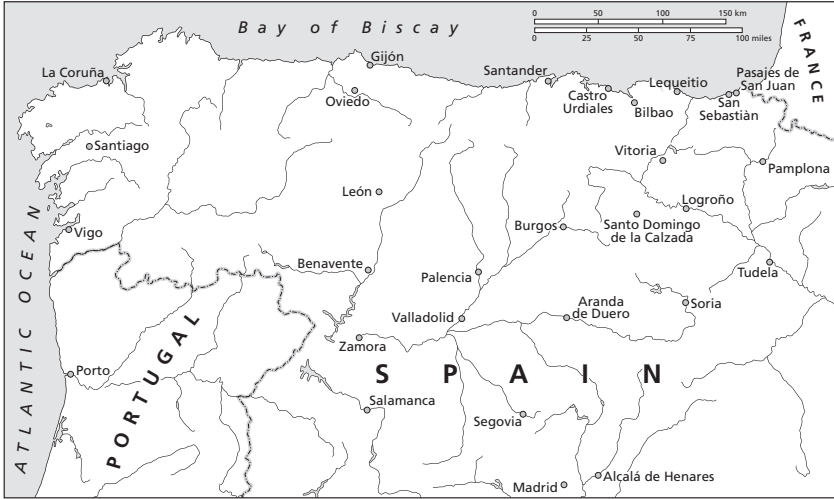
## Maps

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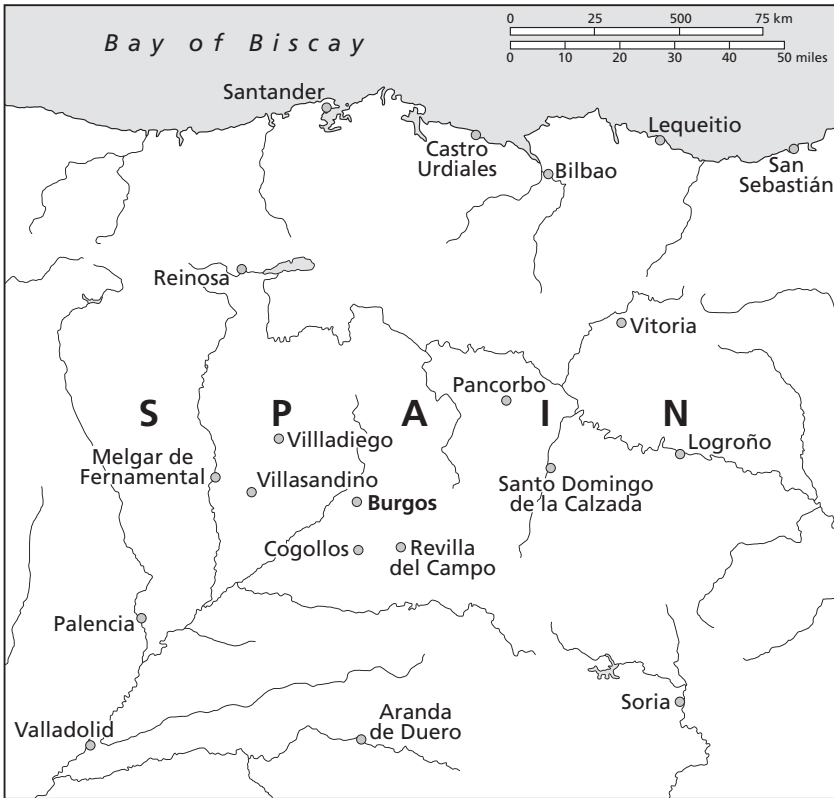


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2. Map of northern Iberian Peninsula



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